SOUTH AUSTRALIAN WINE INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

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COVID-19 impacting wage increases in wine industry

Many wine industry employers are taking a more cautious approach to wage increases for the 2020/21 financial year. This includes waiting to assess the financial impact of COVID-19 before considering any wage increases and projecting a smaller increase than previous years.

That's according to the *2020 National Wine Industry Salary & Benefits Survey,* which has just been released by the South Australian Wine Industry Association (SAWIA).

"There are many COVID-19 related uncertainties in the wine industry at the moment, including the impact of reduction in export demand in some markets, and travel restrictions limiting the ability to service domestic and international markets and on international and domestic tourists visiting cellar doors," said Brian Smedley, Chief Executive of SAWIA.

"Survey feedback indicates some positivity about the ability of wineries to return to normal operations, and for staff to return to work, but some companies are still assessing impact of COVID-19 before determining staffing needs or wage increases for the coming financial year."

In the 2020 National Wine Industry Salary & Benefits Survey, salary and benefits practices and trends across 60 wine industry positions were surveyed, including three new positions: Restaurant/Café Manager, Events/Functions Manager and Direct Sales/Wine Club Manager. The survey confirmed that 'hospitality, events and functions' is an important stream of the wine industry.

Data on workforce age distribution was also collected for the first time in 2020, confirming the ageing workforce of the industry, with more than 30% of employees aged 50 years and above.

The survey respondents revealed that the national industry continues to be male dominated, with a gender split of 65% male and 35% female. There are no major differences at the State-level.

In relation to benefits, company cars and fuel cards/allowance, professional membership subscriptions and mobile phones for non-business use are the most commonly provided benefits. Where a company car is provided, the most common arrangement is for the vehicle to be purchased by the employer and provided at no cost to the employee.

Incentives or performance-based schemes are provided by 79% of all respondents, particularly in relation to sales and managerial employees.

The 2020 Salary & Benefits Survey includes a separate report for small business (defined as business revenue less than $10M per annum) that includes key winemaking, viticulture and management positions.

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This is the 21st Salary & Benefits Survey conducted by SAWIA on behalf of the wine industry. The survey is driven by SAWIA's Employee Relations Committee to ensure the industry can access relevant and up to date wage data and information about salary practices.

"Industry feedback is that the Salary Survey is critical to business planning practices," Brian said. "We're committed to providing leadership, advice and support to South Australian grape and wine businesses, to help them prosper."

You can order a copy of the 2020 National Wine Industry Salary & Benefits Survey here: https://www.winesa.asn.au/our-services/workplace-relations-human-resources/wine-industry-salary-benefits-survey/

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